

FURNITURE: AN ANALYSIS OF NEGERI SEMBILAN TRADITIONAL KITCHEN DESIGN

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to proof the exist of furniture in the kitchen of Negeri Sembilan traditional house. The furniture is essential to determine the lifestyle, environment and social activities. Studies on the origins of the Malays enable us to understand the background and social life of traditional Malay, which eventually led to their civilization. Data analysis focused on kitchen area in Negeri Sembilan traditional houses since it is the most active area in the house. The definition of furniture through an interview with experts plays an important role in defining furniture categories, types and usage. The significant activities in the kitchen analyzed to define the furniture function. In conclusion, Malay furniture exist in the kitchen of traditional Negeri Sembilan house and categorize into three functions - body-supporting unit, storage/utility and tool. The furniture designed into two types - loose item and built-in with house structure. The furniture are a simple form, and the design is direct to the basic needs of user and kitchen function.

1. Introduction

Furniture plays an important element in human life. However, it is not must-have items for some people. Built-in furniture which is often thought as 'modern' is, in fact, the earliest we know - a neolithic house at Skara Brae in the Orkneys incorporates built-in seats and sleeping-place (Lucie-Smith, 1993).

The social background indeed provides the key of the story, for furniture is above all, functional. It is an essential part of the home, and its specific purpose is to the many activities – meals, entertainments, recreation, study and so on - and the inactivities-sleep and rest-of domestic life (Joy, 1972). In addition, architecture and the decorative background are intimately related to furniture, and any integral study of furniture must always be judged in relation to its architectural environment (Boger, 1969).

2. Issues and Objective

The character of the furniture in Italy, France, Spain, England, America, Japan, Korea and Chinese's furniture of the Ming dynasty is clear defined. It is essential to determine the background aspects such as the temperament of the people, wars, alliances and trade.

The Malay well known of their carpentry skill and knowledgeable on build their houses with functional spaces. Even though, the Malay kingdom established as early as 1397 in Melaka, and the Malay had grown in the Malay world since 40,000 years ago, there was no proof of furniture existence in their houses. What is the Malay furniture? What is the purpose?

To answer these questions, we need to analyze data from a case study – Negeri Sembilan traditional house. We limit the scope of research to the kitchen area – the most active area in the house. Since the kitchen representing human activities and furnace, we describe the cooking, preparation food and storing items, as kitchen activities.